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NATIONALISM AND CATHOLICISM

BY

LORD HUGH CECIL

MACMILLAN AND CO., LIMITED
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1919

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NATIONALISM AND CATHOLICISM

It must have struck every thoughtful person during the course of the recent war that there is a remarkable conflict of opinion about war and a soldier's life. This conflict is seen in all sorts of degrees on the one side and the other; but in its most extreme form it exhibits two ethical estimates so widely different as to place the waging of war and the life of a soldier alternatively among the highest and the basest of human occupations. The disagreement is the more notable and exceptional because its influence extends to the opinions and language of very good men. This is exceptional because, while good men often differ violently about theology, on ethical questions it is more usual to find that they come to conclusions substantially identical even from different premises. But if one were to collect all the public utterances about war since August, 1914, made by ministers of religion and other persons sincerely professing Christianity, it would be found that some think that war is wholesome, bracing and regenerating, and that it lifts men in their individual

and social life out of feebleness, selfishness and unbelief; while others equally good and sincere regard war as the negation of our Lord's teaching, as brutalising and satanic. This language respecting war naturally corresponds with similar language respecting the life of a soldier. Some admire that life and praise it as noble, elevating and Christian, to a degree that they are impatient even of prohibiting clergymen from serving as combatants; others believe it to be so immoral to serve as a soldier that a man may rightly disobey the law that requires him so to serve, and should encounter the penalties for his disobedience with the serene fortitude of a martyr to right. It is true that the contrast between the two points of view becomes mitigated when one party is pressed to declare whether they do not think war cruel and wicked, and the other whether they do not recognise the courage and self-sacrifice of soldiers. Under the pressure of such challenges concessions are at once made on both sides which seem to diminish the antagonism of the opposed teachings. But these concessions do not entirely realise a formal harmony; and the practical attitude—which is what most matters in ethics—of the two schools is importantly different. The one school hates war not only for its sorrows and privations but for its moral atmosphere; the other, while it laments the suffering that war causes, breathes the air of war, if not with complacency, at least without dissatisfaction. And those who find something to like even in war itself are enthusiastic for soldiering, while the other party dislike it, and the more

extreme among them can hardly look at a uniform or see a squadron drilling without a sense of impatient or disgusted recoil. It will be worth while to examine these two points of view and to try to analyse what is good and what is bad in soldiering and war, so as. if possible, to understand and explain the curious conflict of opinion.

Take first the life of a soldier in time of peace. Here we find military training praised and admired apart from any consideration of national security. For it is thought that such training inculcates a spirit of discipline and self-denial, a spirit in itself highly valuable, and bringing with it many minor but not negligible advantages, such as are considerate and respectful manners, an upright and healthy body, and a civilised standard of personal cleanliness. These lesser gains are justly claimed ; but the more general claim that military training gives to those who receive it a high power of moral self-control encounters the fatal objection of experience. Soldiers are not usually more self-controlled than civilians ; indeed their ordinary standard of self-control is lower. Mr. Kipling, in lines which everyone knows, has picturesquely contrasted the bitter prejudice against soldiers in time of peace with the extravagant praise of them in time of war. But he himself has little appreciated the full significance of the prejudice which he denounces. Popular judgments, though often exaggerated, are seldom or never baseless If soldiers in peace time have a bad name it cannot be altogether undeserved. Doubtless their failings

are largely due to the temptations brought upon them by the way of life required for purposes of military organisation and training. They are, as Mr. Kipling puts it, "single men in barracks," and their duties can scarcely be so arranged as not to leave them large spaces of vacant time fraught with the proverbial mischiefs of idleness. But such explanations, just as they are, do in fact concede that the moralising influence of military training does not go very deep into human nature. The worth of the pudding is disproved by its eating. If the discipline of a soldier really had the moralising effect which is claimed for it, it would develop in the average man a high standard of self-control such as would triumph over temptation; and a soldier would generally be reckoned as more chaste, more temperate, more industrious than a civilian. If the general estimate of soldiers is precisely the opposite of this, it becomes useless to argue that military training has a deep ethical value for human nature. Indeed such arguments claim for military training consequences which it was assuredly never intended to produce. It does not really aim at self-control; it aims at automatic obedience and service, which is quite a different thing. It aims at making a soldier obey his superior and follow a prescribed routine even under circumstances when fear or excitement have subverted conscious deliberation and judgment. It is interesting to notice that the methods of training for this purpose, which have often been derided by scoffing civilians as irrational and absurd, are in fact very much the

methods which the most modern of psychologists, saturated with belief in auto-suggestion, might have prescribed. The elaborate practice of drill and military evolution until it becomes automatic, the insistence on small marks of external respect towards officers, the emphasis on niceties of dress and appearance—all these are potent means of auto-suggestion by which the sub-consciousness of the soldier is trained to adhere to his routine and to obey his officer, however completely panic or passion may reign in the seat of conscious judgment. The martinet drill-sergeant of old time, who worked out the system, knew nothing of the theory of suggestion or the distinction between the conscious and sub-conscious mind, yet, working instinctively and empirically, arrived at a conclusion sustained by that theory. But this system of discipline has no ethical purpose. Moral self-control indeed belongs to the conscious and not to the sub-conscious mind; and the habit of automatic action and subordination has no bearing whatever on the choice between good and evil or the control by the higher of the lower side of human nature.

It seems then that the discipline of military training cannot deserve the warm admiration which that training excites in some minds. Doubtless it may be good for health and for manners, but no one can really feel enthusiasm of the kind we are considering because drill and training enlarge a recruit's chest measurement or accustom him to carefulness about his dress and appearance. We must seek for some

deeper source to account for the enthusiasm which military training and discipline excite. And a profound and powerful cause is easily noticed. It is the nature of military training to subordinate individual temperament and inclination to the regulations of the Army and to the will of those who exercise authority within the Army. This subordination of the individual to the rules and authorities of the body to which he belongs is of course not peculiar to military life. It exists elsewhere and notably among monks and members of religious societies like the Society of Jesus. But it is not the mere subordination of the individual in the Army to the body to which he belongs which moves men to admiration. It is rather because the Army is a national institution and the subordination of the individual is therefore to the State or nation. It is this, I am confident, more than anything else which stirs enthusiasm. The idea of the individual and his claims being subordinated to those of the State, of his life being absorbed in its larger life, of his inclinations and tastes yielding to its commands, of his very will and perhaps even his conscience conforming to its authority and operating only within the sphere it may allow—these are the ideas which make men admire and praise service in the Army even in peace; and it is upon the estimate of the ethical value of these ideas that our judgment must depend as to the ethical benefit of military service.

I speak here, of course, only of those aspects of soldiering which are characteristic of it. Every honest

profession or occupation has obvious advantages in occupying time, concentrating purpose, diverting from merely selfish interests and exercising healthily the faculties of body and mind. It would be making too elaborate an analysis for the present purpose to consider how far in a variety of small points soldiering is better or worse than other professions in these respects. But the estimate of soldiering as a moral vocation will mainly and decisively depend on the relation between the soldier and his country. His disciplinary training is not intended to moralise him and in fact does not moralise him; and the advantages he may gain in hygiene and manners are too trivial to be weighed. Among the characteristics of soldiering there remain therefore two which are ethically important. The first is the sacrifice and public spirit which a man displays in embracing a soldier's life. The second is the absorption of his individuality in the State which is implied and enforced by military service.

This is true of the soldier even in time of peace. But these two qualities in a soldier's life become much more important and go much deeper in time of war. The tremendous dangers and bitter hardships of war make the act of self-sacrifice involved in voluntarily joining the Army while war is being waged an act justly honoured as lying beyond the compass of the ordinary practice of social virtue. And though under stringent penalties the soldier, once he has joined, is obliged to do a minimum of his duty, he will not be a good soldier unless by voluntary co-

operation he goes far beyond what penalties can exact from him. Accordingly a good soldier in war deserves the praise that belongs to anyone who lives a life habitually self-denying and courageous. The importance of the second aspect of a soldier's life is in war still more enhanced. If the individuality of a soldier in peace time is to some extent controlled by the State, in war the control is immeasurably greater. There is strictly no limit to the obedience that is exacted from a soldier in war. He is required to have no will and no conscience in the operations he undertakes at the bidding of his superiors. Almost every act he does in the course of fighting would be an atrocious crime if it were not justified by the orders he receives in the name of the State. And in the carrying out of those orders he is required as the most elementary of his duties to expose himself to any danger and endure any suffering. Though he may feel sure that his life and the lives of his fellows are being foolishly endangered; worse still, though he may think that the acts he is required to do to his enemies are beyond reason cruel and merciless, he is still bound to obey. Any failure of obedience of critical importance may be, and is, punished with death, so that both formally and substantially the soldier in war yields up to the authority of the State every natural emotion, every conscientious scruple, life and all that life comprises both physical and spiritual.

It is clear that the self-sacrifice displayed in joining the Army and in co-operating with its purposes in

time of war is good, but the surrender of will and responsibility into the hands of the State has a different ethical character. For what purpose is the surrender made? For the efficient waging of war. And when it is waged for a purpose both righteous and sufficient, war is right. A particular war may be right or wrong. It may be right, like the war England declared upon Germany on August 4th, 1914, or it may be wicked, like that made a day earlier by Germany upon Belgium. Yet war, even when waged for a righteous purpose and justified by that purpose, is in its method a departure from Christianity almost as complete as can be conceived. During the last four years and a half it has been a trite theme for moralists to comment on the awful contrast between a religion of love and the acts of the disciples of that religion, displayed in East and West, lavishly and persistently exhausting all human resources the more effectively to kill, maim and ruin one another. A soldier in sacrificing his individuality to the State has become the docile instrument of devilish work. The acts about which he has exercised his own will, his joining the Army, his co-operating readiness to obey however much it may cost him, are justly esteemed to be heroic. He has given to his country all that he can give in forgetfulness of himself. But what his country requires him to do, the use which it makes of his sacrifice, are as remote from the Christian ideal as that sacrifice itself is congruous to it. The citizen becomes a soldier, and as a soldier thinks nothing too much to do and to suffer, and in

all that he gives his country he walks not unworthily in the steps of Christ. But when he has once become the State's instrument without independent will or life of his own, the State uses him, not for Christ's work, but for the devil's. While he goes forward about that work, slaying and mutilating, the unflinching means by which appalling suffering is inflicted on his fellow men, while he is a soldier, part of his country's strength, one of the elements of its success, he is making women widows and children fatherless, he is uprooting civilisation and desolating the world. But when some shot lays him low, killed or wounded, when he becomes what in the language of war is called a casualty or misfortune, when he has ceased to be a help and has become a burden, when he is again an individual in this world or the next and no more an instrument in the hand of the State, he is again seen to be a disciple of Christ who, like his Master, has not shrunk from suffering or death for the love of his brethren. The service he renders to the State is Christian ; the sacrifices he makes for it are holy ; but the work he does at its bidding is hellish. This is the great contrast of war which perplexes and confuses the moral judgment of the world.

We see then that the relation of a soldier to his country in time of war is an elevating one, but that the relation of nation to nation, by which soldiers are made the instruments of cruelty and destruction, is wicked and satanic. This contrast exists equally for all who take part in any degree in war, even as

non-combatants. The burdens the non-combatant bears for his country, the sacrifices that he makes and the privations he accepts, are good. But the hatred that he feels towards the enemy and the rejoicing that sometimes forces itself upon him over their sufferings, are evil. In so far as he partakes in the conflict between nation and nation he is worse : in so far as he is rendering service at his own cost to others he is better.

It seems then that the different estimate of war as being regenerating or as being devilish may be explained by saying that the critics view different things. Those who feel that war has raised and is raising us from a lower to a higher standard are thinking of all that individuals have done for their country ; those who cry out on war as degrading and brutalising and the negation of Christian teaching, are thinking of what we do and feel towards our enemies. This explanation covers much of the conflict of teaching which we observe, but not the whole. For it seems clear that many of those who exalt the regenerating effect of war are thinking, not only of the patriotic zeal of individuals for the country, but are also warmly attracted by the absorption of the individual in the State. This is seen plainly in their attitude towards the application of compulsion for military service. The Military Service Act was supported by two quite distinct bodies of opinion. What was probably the larger body approved compulsion reluctantly from a sense that it was necessary for victory in war and therefore

for the national safety. The other body, agreeing in its necessity as a war measure, evidently rejoiced that the necessity had arisen. To the one body compulsory military service was an unpalatable medicine : to the other it was a delicious food. Yet evidently compulsory service cannot excite admiration because of any element in it of patriotic self-sacrifice. Neither those citizens who compelled nor those who were compelled displayed self-sacrifice. To go into the Army under duress is not heroic ; and it is, if possible, even less heroic to force someone else into the Army. Yet there were not wanting people who spoke of the adoption of compulsory military service as though it were a great ethical triumph, as though it really showed self-denial and self-sacrifice, as if the whole people were somehow or other better and nobler because the larger portion of them had decided to compel the smaller to fight for the common cause. Doubtless there was much confusion of thought in the expression of this zeal for compulsory service. But the interesting thing is that this zeal exists and is undoubtedly a perfectly sincere sentiment. It is a plain sign that the absorption of individuals in the State seems to many minds in itself an edifying and beautiful thing for which they feel a real moral enthusiasm. And there are other signs. There is a disposition to welcome, not only on grounds of expediency, but as being in itself noble and elevating, the control exercised by Government over various aspects of civilian life. There seems in some minds to be almost a hunger to be obliterated as an in-

dividual and to feel oneself nothing but a tool, quasi-inanimate, in the hand of the State. It seems a strange passion, but that it is very strong cannot be denied.

In that most interesting book, " The Commonwealth of Nations," the absorption of the individual in the State is recommended without any limitation. In a most remarkable passage (pp. 21–23) the teaching of Plato as expressed in the " Crito " is held up to unconditional admiration :

> " . . . . How absolute was a Greek's conception of the obedience due from himself to the State may be gathered from the reasons given by the greatest of Athenian citizens for declining to evade an unjust sentence of death. ' Consider it in this way : Suppose the laws and the Commonwealth were to come and appear to me as I was preparing to run away, perhaps they would say, " Socrates, wonder not at our words, but answer us ; you yourself are accustomed to ask questions and to answer them. What complaint have you against us and the city that you are trying to destroy us ? Are we not, first, your parents ? Through us your father took your mother and begat you. Tell us, have you any fault to find with those of us that are the laws of marriage ? " " I have none," I should reply. " Or have you any fault to find with those of us that regulate the nurture and education of the child, which you like others, received ? Did not we do well in bidding your father educate you in music and gymnastic?" " You did," I should say. " Well then since you were brought into the world and nurtured and

educated by us, how, in the first place, can you deny that you are our child and our slave, as your fathers were before you ? And if this be so, do you think that your rights are on a level with ours ? Do you think that you have a right to retaliate upon us if we should try to do anything to you ? You had not the same rights that your father had, or that your master would have had if you had been a slave. You had no right to retaliate upon them if they ill-treated you, or to answer them if they reviled you, or to strike them back if they struck you, or to repay them evil with evil in any way. And do you think that you may retaliate on your country and its laws ? If we try to destroy you because we think it right, will you in return do all that you can to destroy us, the laws, and your country, and say that in so doing you are doing right, you, the man who in truth thinks so much of virtue ? Or are you too wise to see that your country is worthier, and more august, and more sacred, and holier, and held in higher honour both by the Gods and by all men of understanding, than your father and your mother and all your other ancestors ; and that it is your bounden duty to reverence it, and to submit to it, and to approach it more humbly than you would approach your father, when it is angry with you ; and either do whatever it bids you to do or to persuade it to excuse you ; and to obey in silence if it orders you to endure stripes or imprisonment, or if it sends you to battle to be wounded or to die ? That is what is your duty. You must not give way, nor retreat, nor desert your post. In war, and in the court of justice and everywhere,

you must do whatever your city and your country bids you do, or you must convince them that their demands are unjust. But it is against the law of God to use violence to your father or to your mother; and much more so is it against the law of God to use violence to your country." What answer shall we make, Crito? Shall we say that the laws speak truly or no?' Here is presented the duty of the citizen as conceived by the greatest interpreter of Greek ideas. For him the authority of Government still rests on Man's duty to God. But Man's duty to God is inseparably connected with his duty to his fellow men. To them he is bound by an obligation to which he can recognise no limits, an obligation which requires him to sacrifice everything—property and, if necessary, life itself—in the interests of the Commonwealth. It is in the general good of the community that his own particular good is to be sought. His relation to society is that of a limb to the body; for the health of a limb must not be sought for itself, but only as a product of the health of the body as a whole. To neglect the public interest in the pursuit of his own is to grasp at a shadow and to ignore the substance. It is the principle exactly expressed in the divine paradox. 'Whosoever shall seek to save his own life shall lose it; and whosoever shall lose his life shall preserve it.'"

The argument of the "Crito" has never seemed to me very strong. In so far as the contrast is between the selfish interests of an individual and the interests of the community, it is of course quite true that the individual should prefer the interests of his brethren

to his own. But that does not involve passive obedience. On the contrary, rebellion may be a duty. Doubtless rebellion can only be justified for some great and social cause and not for a wrong to an individual. But an individual may avoid the unjust authority of the State and escape from it if he can, as St. Peter and countless good men have done. The reasoning that Plato puts into the mouth of the Laws may easily be answered. "Yes, I owe you gratitude," Socrates might have said, "for the good you have done me, and as long as you were just and righteous I was bound to obey you. But you have become unjust and unrighteous. Your former justice and righteousness cannot sanctify your present wickedness. You cannot store up, as in a savings bank, many pennies of justice in order to draw out some time or another a pound's worth of injustice. While you were right I obeyed you. Now you are wrong I renounce you." As far as I can see, the Laws would have no reply to this. It is true that Christian teaching might induce an individual to sacrifice himself even to injustice if he were sure that by sacrificing himself he was doing good to others. But this would only be right if the sacrifice were strictly confined to the individual himself. In short, there is none of the unlimited character of the obligation of the individual to the State that is claimed. The authority of the State may be at every point challenged and required to justify itself according to the law of God.

But the important point for the present purpose is

not the opinions or reasoning of Plato but rather those of Mr. Curtis and his collaborators. The comment on the "Crito" is stronger than the text. Mr. Curtis goes so far as to say that the individual is but a limb of the State. This appears to involve more than an unselfish preference for the interests of the community. Incorporation implies the absorption of will and even of conscience. For a limb cannot have scruples or refuse obedience to the body it belongs to for the sake of the authority of a higher law. If then the individual be only a limb he cannot appea from the will of the State to the law of God. Yet without that appeal we shall make the authority of the State independent of the authority of God. The incorporation of the individual in the State is indeed a sort of idolatry. For the Christian is taught to believe that he is incorporate in Christ, as a limb is in a body, as a branch is in a vine. This is well; but it is only well because Christ is perfect and divine. To teach that the individual is incorporate in the State is to teach that he is incorporate in what can never be perfect and may often only express the worst passions of himself and men like himself. By such an incorporation conscience is juggled away, and with conscience the power of the moral law. A man thinks and feels with the multitude of his fellows; yet conscience may check and correct him. But if he believes that he is but a limb of the State who must have no will but the State's, conscience is stifled. For the State reflects the mind of the multitude and its will is only the will of the man and his

fellows. By the foolishest of idolatries he turns an echo into an oracle and worships the reverberation of his own voice. But the idolatrous character of nationalist sentiment is a subject to which I must later return.

All this concurs with what has been already urged about the evil which a soldier is forced to work in war by his absorption in the State. That absorption is a root of wickedness ; and it is so even in a righteous war. War is not always wrong. It may in some circumstances be, as we well know, an urgent and sacred duty to make war. But so may civil war be a duty, and so may individual homicide. Yet homicide and civil war are evils and, if they on any occasion become duties, it is because they are the only remedies for worse evils. Their occurrence, however legitimate, proves that a most grave departure from the principles of Christianity has taken place. They show that there has been a great victory for evil, a great apostasy from right. They are symptoms of the presence of some deadly moral disease. And all this is true of international war. It is always evil, though it is sometimes the least of evils, one of which is unavoidable. But it is an evil and the sign of other evils. It follows that there is a presumption that whatever belongs to it is evil too. This becomes more than a presumption in respect to anything which is characteristic of its evil nature. And as has been pointed out, the absorption of the individual in the State is connected with all that is bad in war. The wickedness of war lies in the relation between nations ;

and it is when the individual becomes absorbed in the State that he begins to take part in that wickedness, although without the guilt of choosing it, because he acts only as the State's instrument. It seems probable, however, that he suffers some of the contamination of the moral filth in which he is forced to move. For it is only exceptional human beings who can inflict death and suffering on their fellow men, even though innocently and rightly, without some moral deterioration. This truth is testified to by the abhorrence that attaches to the public executioner; not very reasonably, since if it is right to hang murderers, it cannot be wrong that someone should be willing to hang them. Yet we feel that a man whose occupation in life is hanging others, however rightly, is almost certain to be the worse for his experience. And it seems likely that such terrible necessities of war as are expressed in phrases to which we have become accustomed, and which rather veil than disclose the horrors they imply, will leave on many soldiers an abiding mark. "Bombing Germans out of a dug-out," "Enfilading a trench with a machine-gun," "Bayoneting the enemy in a trench" —it needs little imagination to conceive the horrors of purposely and consciously inflicted suffering and death which such phrases as these really betoken. Who can come unstained out of such ordeals? Yet the soldiers have no responsibility or guilt for what is done. They are instruments in the hands of the State, and the terrible and unnatural spectacle of brave and kindly men inflicting unspeakable

suffering on others arises, as the fruit does from the root, out of the absorption of the individual in the State. This absorption is essential to war. Without it war would become impossible, because at every step the human conscience would rebel against its necessary incidents. Not only the sensitive conscience of rare and sanctified humanity but the conscience of the ordinary, nay, the conscience of the bad man, the conscience of many criminals, the conscience of all but a small minority of the most degraded of the human race would shrink instinctively from what is part, and no unusual part, of the routine of war. But conscience does not operate and rightly does not operate ; it has been absorbed in the will of the State. This absorption is necessary for the efficiency of war, and it has been enforced upon the soldier by an elaborate system of training, admirably skilful for its purpose, in order that not only scruples of mercy and pity but even the stronger passions of fear and anger may be under the control of the authority of the superior, who is the organ of the State. That this tremendous mechanism may be needed, is needed, in certain circumstances to avoid worse evils, that the guilt of its employment does not rest on a State who uses it for safety and defence, that atrocious as it is, it may be made the means of deliverance for humanity, is true. But can anyone soberly maintain that it is not in all its parts, except the ultimate purpose for which it is sometimes employed, an evil thing ? And if not, must we not condemn the strange sentiment which loves the

obliteration of the individual in the State—an obliteration which renders this fearful service to the efficiency of war, that by it the barriers of conscience are thrown down to let loose the powers of hell upon earth ?

It is true that if ever war is justifiable, then the apparatus of war and, as part of it, the absorption of the individual in the State, is justifiable too. Doubtless it is justifiable in the same sense as all the rest of the evil of war is justifiable—that is, as a lesser evil than something worse. But the present question is not whether it is justifiable as the least possible of inevitable evils, but whether it is in itself edifying and beautiful. And the fact that it is part of the cruel machinery of war suggests that it is in itself bad. This suggestion is powerfully confirmed by a scrutiny of the causes of the recent war.

The origin of the war has been traced to various evil sources. Preachers have usually ascribed it to a divine judgment upon a materialist and pleasure-loving generation, who in the pursuit of money or of self-indulgence have forgotten God and His laws. But this opinion, though respectable from the character and number of those who have expounded it, does not stand examination. It implies either that God sent the war by His own direct act as a punishment for the sins of materialism and self-indulgence, or that the war has naturally arisen out of those sins and may therefore without impropriety be spoken of as the divine judgment which, according to the economy of the universe, inevitably follows

upon evil. The doctrine that God ever directly inflicts evil, though sustained by much of the language of the Old Testament, seems to be an imperfect expression of the truth, and does not upon the whole accord with the teaching of the New Testament. Our Lord, unlike the Prophets of the Old Testament, does not speak of the approaching destruction of Jerusalem as directly the act of God. It is the "enemies" who "shall cast up a bank about thee, and compass thee round and keep thee in on every side, and dash thee to the ground and thy children within thee." And St. Paul, in condemning the wicked Corinthian, speaks of delivering "such a one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus." It would seem that judgments are brought about by the divine protection being withdrawn and evil taking its natural course. It follows then that if the war is to be esteemed a divine judgment upon materialism, it must be in the second of the two ways mentioned, as arising naturally out of the wrong-doing of which it is the punishment in accordance with the saying "the wages of sin is death." But it does not seem that any natural connection can be established between the war and the love of material pleasure and self-indulgence. The immediate cause of the war was unquestionably German policy. Whatever moral responsibility lies with other nations is indirect and may be charged against them in some such form as creating a situation which tempted Germany to its crime. And so far as self-indulgence

goes, in the general connotation of that expression, Germany is, of all European nations, perhaps the least affected by any love of pleasure and ease. Indeed the qualities that the German people have displayed during the war show that if virtue consisted merely in bearing hardship and making bitter and heartrending sacrifices from a patriotic motive, the Germans would deserve to be praised as the best nation in the world. They are a remarkable illustration of the truth of St. Paul's saying: "If I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and if I give my body to be burned, but have not charity, it profiteth me nothing." Self-denial and self-sacrifice without charity are useless: though the Germans are entitled to the credit of these qualities for what it is worth. But indeed self-indulgence leads men to ruin by a far different path than that of war. Men through self-indulgence may become soft and ease-loving to the degree that they may not be able to make a righteous war. But their temptation will never lie in the direction of making an unrighteous one. Whether true or not, it would be plausible to charge the American pacifist sentiment in the earlier years of the war to the exaggerated growth of ease and prosperity. But to lay German aggressiveness to the charge of self-indulgence is an absurdity. And the motive for that aggressiveness is obvious enough, and needs no minute search for discovery. The Germans made war in order to exalt Germany and increase its greatness, power and wealth. It is true that as part of this national ambition it was designed

to enhance the material prosperity of Germany. But that was plainly only as part of the general national greatness. And if reports are to be trusted, the commercial party, though ultimately converted to the policy of war, were neither the first nor the most active in urging it. It was the militarist party animated by such teachings as those of Treitschke, which wanted war first and urged it most strongly; and though doubtless several motives coalesced in their minds to press them on their course, the strongest and most indispensable seems to have been enthusiasm for German national greatness. And if any part of the guilt of the war lies with other countries, and in particular with England, it should be sought in provocation of German nationalist sentiment, such as was perhaps offered by the national self-glorification of Queen Victoria's two Jubilees in 1887 and 1897. In short, it is not easy to connect the war with materialism and self-indulgence; it is very easy to connect it with nationalism; that is, with the sentiment which makes each man rejoice in his nationality as distinct from and opposed to all other nationalities, so that he exalts it as against them, and magnifies its greatness as the end of effort and aspiration, the crown of life and its purposes.

Nationalism is a natural sentiment and one which gives large though not complete satisfaction to a strong and deep-rooted instinct. That instinct is what the French call *esprit de corps*, and it is probably wisest to accept it as an element in human nature without seeking to analyse it further. To say

that it is an extended selfishness or that it is a survival from some savage stage in human development when men hunted in packs like wolves, seems unreal and unconvincing. The sentiment as we know it is certainly quite different from selfishness and often leads to the sublimest heights of unselfishness. Nor is it possible to decide what may be the relation between an instinct found in very civilised men and that of savages hunting like wolves. *Esprit de corps*, as we know it, is a fact; and it operates potently and almost universally upon human nature. Men feel this sentiment for all sorts of bodies and organisations with which they are connected; for their families, clans and nationalities; for the Army as against the Navy; for their trade unions; for their schools, colleges and regiments; even for the Great Northern Railway as against the North-Western Railway; long ago in Constantinople for the Blue faction or for the Green, to-day in England for each political party apart from the principles which it may or may not maintain. It is not too much to say that if you group three men together and call them, or let them call themselves, by any distinctive name, they will begin to feel a zeal for their body and an antagonism for every other similar body; and this zeal and antagonism will be as real motives of action as any other passion or affection. But it may be observed that there is one great distinction between nationality and any other body in which men are bound together. For a nationality and for a nationality alone do men feel justified in transgressing or

superseding the moral law. Oxford men do not shoot Cambridge men, neither do officers in the Guards officers in the Line ; and though the contentions of factions have sometimes raised men's minds to such a degree of passion that crime and bloodshed have resulted, no one coolly or soberly defends such excesses. But Englishmen and Germans do, as we know, feel entirely justified in killing and mutilating one another for the sake of their respective nationalities. This is because of their absorption in those nationalities. The sentiment of nationality in time of war supersedes the moral law because it so completely absorbs the individual that it disallows any appeal by conscience to anything above the State. A man does not permit the sentiment that he feels for his school or his trade union or his regiment or his political party to make him act independently of conscience and the moral law. But for his nationality in an international war he sets aside conscience in obedience to the State, just as, if he be a Roman Catholic, he sets aside rivate judgment in obedience to the Church, in either case after a single act of abnegation abandoning himself to the accepted authority.

But this supersession of the moral law by nationalist sentiment is, of course, not unlimited, except for the subordinate soldier actually engaged in fighting. Statesmen and commanders, as well as non-combatants generally, are not thought to be altogether exempt from the moral law even in time of war. And until the recent war the tendency of civilisation

was constantly to narrow the limits within which it was permissible to commit immoralities in war. Such was the purpose of the Geneva and Hague Conventions, such was also the effect of the tendency of public opinion to insist on a higher standard of truthfulness between diplomatic negotiators and to require that treaties should be regarded as binding, even to the serious disadvantage of their signatories. The peculiarity of the late war is that it has thrown back this movement for making war more civilised; and it is notable that it has only thrown it back in its international aspect. For in some ways the war was the most civilised that has ever been waged. Never before, I suppose, has a country in the occupation of great armies been so carefully policed and so free from ordinary crime and outrage. The German army have committed atrocities; but it is the peculiar iniquity of those atrocities that they have been apparently done by superior order, and are therefore acts of international hostility. Certainly in Western Europe mere lawlessness has never been so closely restrained. The set-back of the movement for bringing war more strictly under the control of the moral law, has only applied to its international character; it has been the fruit of the growth of the spirit of nationalism, and of that alone.

Both the origin and the character of the war thus tend to confirm the earlier expressed judgment that nationalism with its absorption of the individual in the State bears very evil fruit. But it does not

follow that the patriotic impulse of the individual to sacrifice himself for the State is other than virtuous and heroic. Patriotism is morally quite a different thing from nationalism: they differ as love does from hatred, for while patriotism makes a man love his country nationalism makes him hate other countries. If, indeed, patriotic sentiment be suffered to feel itself independent of the moral law, it will grow into nationalism. Yet patriotic sentiment in its proper sphere bears all the notes of the highest self-sacrifice and mimics the glory of religious martyrdom itself. There is nothing in the experience of the present war to diminish our reverence for patriotism, for the deeds of courage and endurance which spring from it, and for the even more radiant deeds of mutual love and kindness which, although incidentally, adorn a soldier's service in war. We have heard many tales of the kindness of soldiers to one another and even to their enemies, of their readiness to risk their lives and to lose them in the hope of saving or relieving a comrade. These acts, even though they are not directly patriotic, strongly suggest that those who do them have come under the influence of a noble motive and walk in a way of righteousness. We come back constantly in the actual experience of the present war, as in the abstract considerations with which this paper begins, to the contrast of the purity and nobility of the relation between the individual and his country and the consequent edification of himself, so that many rise often and some habitually to the level of heroes

and saints ; and upon the other hand, the manifest wickedness and cruelty of the international relation between State and State in war, which is the supreme expression of nationalist sentiment. What a man does as a man towards his country or even incidentally under the influence of the sentiment towards his country which has animated him, is good ; but what he does as a soldier in the name of his country to the enemy is bad. Patriotism is good : nationalism is bad.

It strengthens this impression to notice that it has been part of the progress of civilisation to limit the power of corporate sentiment completely to absorb the individual, so as to make it operate only on behalf of larger and larger and therefore fewer and fewer corporate bodies. As already observed, men do not supersede the moral law nowadays on behalf of their families or of any other organisation to which they belong except the State. But at an earlier period it was not so. Men fought for their families and, more recently, for their clans with the same ardour with which they now fight for their countries. They felt a sentiment resembling patriotism and not less elevated and self-sacrificing in its character, for these smaller bodies. Sir Walter Scott in " Waverley " has drawn a most touching picture of the sentiment that animated a Highland clansman in 1745. It is in the narrative of the trial of Fergus McIvor and his clansman Evan Maccombich.

> " Evan Maccombich looked at him with great earnestness and, rising up, seemed anxious to speak ; but the confusion of the court, and the

perplexity arising from thinking in a language different from that in which he was to express himself, kept him silent. There was a murmur of compassion among the spectators, from an idea that the poor fellow intended to plead the influence of his superior as an excuse for his crime. The Judge commanded silence, and encouraged Evan to proceed.

" ' I was only ganging to say, My Lord,' said Evan, in what he meant to be an insinuating manner, ' that if your excellent honour, and the honourable Court, would let Vich Ian Vohr go free just this once, and let him gae back to France, and no to trouble King George's government again, that ony six o' the very best of his clan will be willing to be justified in his stead ; and if you'll just let me gae down to Glennaquoich, I'll fetch them up to ye mysel', to head or hand, and you may begin wi' me the very first man.'

" Notwithstanding the solemnity of the occasion, a sort of laugh was heard in the court at the extraordinary nature of the proposal. The Judge checked this indecency, and Evan, looking sternly around, when the murmur abated, ' If the Saxon gentlemen are laughing,' he said, ' because a poor man, such as me, thinks my life, or the life of six of my degree, is worth that of Vich Ian Vohr, it's like enough they may be very right ; but if they laugh because they think I would not keep my word, and come back to redeem him, I can tell them they ken neither the heart of a Hielandman, nor the honour of a gentleman.'

" There was no further inclination to laugh among the audience, and a dead silence ensued."

This is fiction, though we feel that it is marked by the fidelity of a work of genius. But in Boswell's "Tour in the Hebrides" we come upon an exhibition of clan feeling much less touching, indeed rather comic in its character, but not less significant of the depth and power of the sentiment.

> "Being desirous to visit the opposite shore of the island, where Saint Columba is said to have landed, I procured a horse from one M'Ginnis, who ran along as my guide. The M'Ginnises are said to be a branch of the clan of M'Clean. Sir Allan had been told that this man had refused to send him some rum, at which the knight was in great indignation. 'You rascal,' said he, 'don't you know that I can hang you, if I please?' Not adverting to the chieftain's power over his clan, I imagined that Sir Allan had known of some capital crime that the fellow had committed, which he could discover, and so get him condemned; and said 'How so?' 'Why,' said Sir Allan, 'are they not all my people?' Sensible of my inadvertency, and most willing to contribute what I could towards the continuation of feudal authority, 'Very true,' said I. Sir Allan went on; 'Refuse to send rum to me, you rascal! Don't you know that if I order you to go and cut a man's throat, you are to do it?' 'Yes, an 't please your honour! and my own too, and hang myself too.' The poor fellow denied that he had refused to send the rum. His making these professions was not merely a pretence in presence of his chief; for after he and I were out of Sir Allan's hearing, he told me, 'Had he sent his dog for the rum,

> I would have given it; I would cut my bones for him.' It was very remarkable to find such an attachment to a chief, though he had then no connection with the island, and had not been there for fourteen years. Sir Allan, by way of upbraiding the fellow, said, 'I believe you are a *Campbell*.'"

No intelligent critic will fall into the mistake of confusing this devotion of the clansman to his Chief with the more modern subserviency of a dependent to a great man. It was patriotism, as we should now call it, which was at work. And the Chief's taunt, "You are a Campbell," is precisely the same as the modern reproach, "You are a pro-German." We have, in fact, all the features of patriotic and nationalist sentiment reproduced in these illustrations, with the difference that it is a clan and not a nation that is the object of the sentiment. Everyone recognises that notwithstanding the self-sacrifice and self-forgetfulness which devotion to a clan engendered in the individual clansman, the sentiment for a clan was on the whole mischievous and destructive. Harsh as was the suppression of the Highland clans after '45, the gain of that operation far outweighed the loss. The cruelties, the massacres, the fire-raisings, the robbery, which had resulted from the contests between clans were put an end to, and in a short time the Highlands became first peaceful and then civilised, while the courage and self-sacrifice which in the days of the clans had adorned without redeeming social anarchy, sustained and glorified the greatness of

Britain by service in the Highland regiments. The substitution of the nation for the clan as the object of sentiment was a great step in the progress of civilisation. And though at the present moment our just indignation with the German attack on Belgium makes it harder than usual to believe, it is not less a civilising step to move from small nationalities to large ones, if by nationality is meant, as in general we have meant up to now, a possible source of international war. The unification of the little principalities of Italy in a single kingdom, the federation of the various German States in the German Empire, were rightly recognised as advances in civilising progress. It was customary indeed to justify these new unities because they were founded upon national sentiment, but the truth is that while national sentiment made them possible, it is the diminution of opportunity for international war involved by the absorption of small States in large ones which affords their best justification. Doubtless where there are deep underlying differences it is mischievous and cruel to place men of one nationality under the domination of another. But where it is possible without harsh subjection of one nationality to another to unite with general goodwill smaller nations in a larger nationality, the gain to civilisation is great because the fewer the nations the smaller the sphere of war and the larger the sphere of law. This is a truth which ought to be borne in mind in the approaching European settlement after the war. It is most desirable that the rights of small nation-

alties should be safeguarded; that is to say, that they should be protected from all aggression by larger nations. But it is also most desirable that precautions should be taken to avoid any increase in the possible sources of war. Every new independent nation, as things now are, may become a cause of war unless some special arrangement be made to avoid the danger. Such a special arrangement was made for Belgium; and it is the greatest of all the crimes and of all the calamities which have marked the war that the neutrality of Belgium should have been violated. But it may be hoped that the result of the war may make the impolicy of that violation as plain as its wickedness. If so, neutrality guaranteed by Europe might be regarded as safely protected against war, and it might be well to apply the precedent of Belgium to any new small States that may be created. By such neutralisation new nationalities will not be new dangers to peace, but will, in a degree, be made subject to a system of law. It is most desirable that new nationalities shall rather follow the pattern of Belgium than that of the Balkan States. Nowhere is the disturbing influence of independent nationality more apparent than in the Balkan Peninsula; and it would be well if the Balkan States could learn that Europe, while upholding their independence, will not suffer that independence to be used for the purpose of making on any pretence war upon their neighbours. They together with all small nations ought to be made neutral States like Belgium, bound by solemn treaty

engagements not to make war but to submit all quarrels in which they may be involved to the arbitration of The Hague Tribunal. This would be a valuable precaution against war. It may be at present impossible to prevent great States going to war; but no small nation ought in any circumstances to be allowed to take arms. If this be not insisted upon, the existence of small nationalities will do a great deal more harm than good.

The neutralisation of small States and their subjection to the authority of The Hague Tribunal would be a security against war. But the great States would remain, dangerous centres of belligerent nationalism. Yet there is a faint hope that even in respect to the great States of the world some limitation to their right of belligerence may be realised. We hear already the beginning of discussions about a possible League of Nations. But we must face the truth that such a League would involve a diminution of the full right of independent nationality belonging to the States that entered into it. It is the essence of national independence that the nation is not a member of any larger society than itself and recognises no social or political obligation arising out of such membership. The only obligations of a nation are those which it has voluntarily imposed upon itself by treaty. Doubtless the League of Nations would originate in a treaty; but if it were successful and long endured, it would amount to a federation of nations, although the federal connection would be at first very slight and affect a very limited sphere

of national action. But however slight the federal tie and however limited its operation, it would mark a momentous step towards the creation of a cosmopolitan nationality absorbing ultimately the independent existence of the nations that we know. Nations that could no longer make war would not in truth be nations at all. They would have entered upon the road which was traversed by the American States. They would be on the way to abandon that complete independence of nationality which was claimed by South Carolina and the other Confederates and destroyed by the victory of the North in the Civil War. As the history of America shows, it is not permanently possible to combine the claim of full nationality by a smaller polity with allegiance to a larger one. If the European States enter into a League of Nations, and really mean to abide by it, they will be admitting a certain measure of allegiance to a larger polity—a polity of Europe, of Christendom, or of the world. That means they will no longer be entirely independent nations. To abandon the right of belligerence is to abandon the full claim of nationality and to plant the seed of a cosmopolitan federation.

This would be a restriction of nationalism. Are men's minds in the mood to consent to such a restriction? It seems doubtful. There is, indeed, a profound weariness of war and a deep impatience with all that may make war necessary or possible. For a time, probably for a generation, these feelings will suffice to maintain peace. But there is no

diminution to be observed in the force of nationalist sentiment; and if nationalist sentiment remains strong, so soon as the sufferings and sacrifices of the recent war become matters only of history, so soon as those who have lived through them, die or become too old to guide opinion or control events, nationalist sentiment will begin to reassert itself and to move towards its inevitable goal—another war. The hatred of foreign nationalities is strong in men's minds to-day. National ambitions are limited only by the sense of exhaustion which the war has caused. In the years of peace and recuperation that are likely to follow the war, nations will go on hating nations and the greatness of each nationality will be the object of the highest enthusiasm of its citizens. Such at least is the estimate which experience suggests. The hope of the nineteenth century that because war was from a materialist point of view a folly it would necessarily cease, has been dimmed or extinguished by the tremendous event of our day. Material gain will in truth never be the strongest of human motives, nor is it to be desired that it should be. What is called "Cobdenism" in the jargon of politicians, fell into a profound miscalculation when, going beyond the region of economics, it aspired to exorcise the demon of war by invoking the protection of Mammon. Some much stronger divinity is needed for that exorcism.

And if love of gain will not fetter nationalism, neither, it may be feared, will the paper of a diplomatic instrument. Nationalism, as we have seen,

is the strongest expression known to most men of the corporate sentiment or *esprit de corps*. Nationality originates in many ways ; in community of language or of race, or sometimes in mere geographical contiguity or in allegiance to a common ruler. In former days the last motive was the strongest : in our time men's minds look rather to some real or supposed racial similarity on which to build the fabric of corporate sentiment. But national sentiment really makes its own basis. Once give it something to start upon, once let the minds of men turn towards one another with a sense of corporate unity, and the thing is done. They cling together and call themselves a nation and are ready to sacrifice even their lives for that nation's sake. And of all the causes which make men thus turn to each other and cling together the strongest is not their own mutual affection but their common fear of some enemy repulsive to them, by reason of a distinction of race or language or religion or temperament. Even from its cradle the sentiment of nationality combines evil with good, nationalism with patriotism. Inherent in it there is hatred of other nations, a spirit of emulation and self-assertion which fructifies in war. For all its beauty and grace nationality is like a serpent with its poison-fang ready in some moment of passion to cause death. But it has tremendous power, and we shall scarcely charm it into obedience by the pipings of diplomacy.

Diplomacy must doubtless do its part. It must frame and construct the organisation of the League.

It must make a constitution for the civilised world. But an international constitution no more than a national one will be effective if it is not sustained and vivified by the support of those for whose government it is designed. And the League of Nations will have to encounter and overcome the tremendous power of nationalism before it can gain a sufficient measure of that support. If the sentiment of nationalism remain in undiminished strength, the League will do little more for peace than the European Concert of twenty years ago. That Concert might have become the germ of a federation of Europe. It was even called by that name.* But it had not sufficient vitality to resist nationalism. Nationalism was too strong for it and it perished. Whence comes the strength of nationalism? Why should men thus passionately, almost insanely, love the body to which they belong? Why, when the body takes the shape of a State, do they make themselves slaves to it through life to death? The first and obvious answer is that man is by divine appointment a social being, that he is meant to live in a society, that the State is therefore part of the divine purpose and that he has the instincts of a citizen as he has those of a husband and a father because the State is no less essential to his existence than the family. But this does not explain whence comes the morbid element which through all this paper we have been considering. That men should live as citizens of a State and should owe to that State

* The late Lord Salisbury so spoke of it in a public speech.

all the loyalty and obedience which is necessary for a well-ordered social life is altogether as it should be. It is doubtless entirely in accord with God's Will—"The powers that be are ordained of God." But when you pass from the inner life of the State to its international relations, the sentiment has a different ethical character and effect. As I have argued, the patriotic sentiment which unites a man to his country is good, but when it looks across the frontier and makes him hate other countries it is bad. This then is the question: Whence comes this morbid development of a good thing: why does patriotism develop into nationalism: what makes the wholesome social instincts and passions of man degenerate so as to become the parents of all the wickedness of war?

I suggest that the explanation of this problem is that man is intended to give his highest loyalty and supremest devotion to something greater than the State of which he is a citizen. Just as he loves his country better than his school or his regiment or his trade union, so there is something which he ought to love better than his country. Nationality is not, or ought not to be, the highest object for the corporate sentiment that is so potent a force. Accordingly, when a man devotes to the nation to which he belongs the very highest and best that he has to give, when it becomes the greatest thing that he knows, the supreme object of his love and sacrifice, there is a perversion. And all through human nature perversion is always a deadly danger. It is

neither an archaic superstition nor an obsolete doctrine, that idolatry is the first of sins. For it is the perversion of the religious instinct, and the religious instinct is the highest and the strongest of human motives. And nationalism may easily be discerned to be a sort of idolatry. For it is one of the commonplaces of theology that every Christian is a member of a body greater than any nation, of a body indeed which, by a mystery transcending human understanding, is the body of Christ Himself. This body is the Catholic Church. It is that man may play his part as a member of this body that he is gifted with the corporate sentiment and its tremendous power. That he may give himself over with all his soul and all his mind and all his strength to this body and its corporate life he is endowed with the portentous passion which, perverted, desolates the world. And it is by restoring this passion to its true and natural object that nationalism can be purified and restrained and the League of Nations sustained in its work by sufficient power. If every Christian were filled, as he ought to be, with a true spirit of devotion to the Body of Christ, his feeling for nationality would sink naturally into its proper place. The element of hatred would drop out of it because that is inconsistent with the higher allegiance. He would no longer feel hostile to other nations; for his love of the whole catholic body would extinguish all national hatreds and jealousies. All that would be left in his mind would be a healthy patriotic sentiment conditioned at every stage by his higher devotion

to the Church, and seen, like all the other sentiments for all the other bodies to which he might belong, in its true proportion, entitled to a duly limited loyalty, the object of a real but strictly controlled enthusiasm.*

If, then, humanity is to be rescued from war it cannot be done merely by diplomatic instruments, however wisely conceived, or by leagues of peace, however skilfully organised. The League of Nations will be indeed indispensable as an organ, a body. But it will be weak and futile if it lacks a potent sentiment to be its inspiration, its soul. Only if it is felt to be the organ in diplomatic affairs of the true spiritual unity of mankind will it have life and power and authority. It must overwhelm nationalism with something stronger and purer. And this can only be done by turning devotion and enthusiasm from the nation to that universal Christian Society, the Church. If it be objected that this implies a change in the theological position of the great majority of protestant Christians, it may be answered

* Doubtless this change would have dangers of its own, as history abundantly shows, if the Church itself falls short of its ideal. But the ideal catholicism would be strictly subject to the authority of Christ. Ideally the individual, looking beyond the nation, would yield himself to be absorbed in a Body which would be perfectly obedient to its divine Head. The difficulty of attaining this ideal lies outside the topic here discussed. But while the Church does fall short of the ideal, I should contend strongly for the right and duty of the individual to appeal to the law of God as revealed in the Bible to correct the faults of an imperfect Church. All this, however, is part of another controversy.

that for the present purpose no change would be necessary. For whether logically or not, protestant Christians unanimously accept the catholic ideal in so far as it implies the universality of the Christian society, the brotherhood of men, the uniformity of the moral law throughout the world and the supreme and equal claim of Christ upon all races and nations. If it be preferred to substitute devotion to Christendom for devotion to the Church, the one phrase will serve to correct the evil of nationalism as well as the other. The distinction, indeed, between an undenominational Christendom and an Apostolic Church is very great; and many evils would, I believe, result from preferring the first ideal to the second. But among those evils nationalism would not be numbered. For the restraint of nationalism the essential thing is that a catholic sentiment should be substituted for a national sentiment, that catholicism should take the place of nationalism. And so far as an abstract assent goes, Christians are, I believe, absolutely unanimous in teaching that every disciple of Christ is bound to his brethren by a common tie of fraternity and a common allegiance to their Master, and that these bonds are both more binding and more sacred than any national connection.

The difficulty does not lie in the doctrine of Christians but in their practice. No one disbelieves catholicism; but the conduct of very few is influenced by it. The manifold schisms of Christianity are an evidence of the weakness of catholic sentiment. But, what is stranger, even within those

religious communions which emphasise the importance of catholicism, it has been found by experience too weak to stand against national feeling. The Roman Communion puts catholicism in the forefront of its religious system. Not only is the name Catholic habitually used and claimed as a monopoly, but a catholic acceptance is made the supreme and conclusive test of religious truth, although catholic acceptance is defined in a manner which seems to members of other communions artificial and unreal. But in spite of all this emphasis on catholicism among Roman Christians, we find that Bavarians prefer the national tie that binds them to Prussians to the religious tie that should connect them with Belgians, and that Roman Catholic nations treat quite as a matter of course their obligation to fight at the command of their rulers against one another. And what is found in the Roman Communion is less surprisingly found everywhere else in Christendom. Nationalism has reigned supreme for centuries and still reigns. Catholicism gets nothing but lip service ; and while other parts of the Christian revelation are still constantly showing their power over human action, this particular group of tenets, although unanimously accepted by Christian people, has become feeble and ineffectual, a futility which no one denies and no one observes.

Here, then, is surely a work which the various Christian bodies throughout the world might well undertake. Their power is often hindered by their disagreement. But in these matters there is no

disagreement. The beliefs that are necessary to place the claim of the universal Christian society (however that expression be interpreted) above the claim of nationality are part of the common teaching of all Christians. Christendom can therefore speak with a united voice. And it can give to any diplomatic or political movement for abolishing war that power and validity without which such a movement must certainly fail. A league of peace, the beginnings of a federation of the nations, will be stable and effectual only so long as the horror and dread inspired by the late war remains fresh in the minds of men, unless league and federation can be strengthened by a sentiment powerful enough to turn men's minds from their present zeal for nationality and attach them to a wider organisation. What patriotism did in taming clans and tribes, catholicism must do to tame nations. The opportunity is a unique one in human history. Never was weariness of war so deeply felt, never have its evils been so profoundly brought home to the conscience of men. The task of moving national sentiment from its supreme position is doubtless very hard, but at least attention to anything that offers relief from war has now been secured. If during the next thirty or forty years, during the natural respite which exhaustion will ensure, every Christian teacher has constantly in view as the primary duty of his vocation to preach the superiority of the catholic over the national claim, something might well be done to move the allegiance of men to its true seat. It may be regretted

that in our own Mission of Repentance and Hope this aspect of religious truth was not more emphasised. Exhortations to temperance or chastity, warnings against the evils of materialism, are indeed never out of place ; and doubtless good has been done by the reiteration of the Christian message on these topics. But there was nothing in the circumstances of the time which made such preaching peculiarly appropriate. The present need is to move men's minds from the national to the catholic ideal and the present occasion is fit for the movement. By this path and by this alone can we reach perpetual peace. Catholic sentiment can alone securely bind humanity together. It is only when the glory of the nations has been brought within the City of God that we can hope to be free from the agony of war or to allay the sufferings of mankind by the healing leaves of the tree of life.

APPENDIX

THE following speech and letter are reprinted as dealing with the same evil of excessive nationalism which is the principal topic of this pamphlet.

This speech was delivered in the House of Commons on November 21, 1917, in opposition to the amendment to the Reform Bill disfranchising conscientious objectors to military service :—

LORD HUGH CECIL : Just before the House adjourned last night my right hon. Friend the Leader of the House addressed to the House a very remarkable speech. As I listened, that speech excited in my mind both surprise and indignation. My right hon. Friend, in a quite momentary irritation with me—and none of my right hon. Friend's irritation goes beyond the moment—seemed to think that I was criticising his speech because I thought it was a foolish speech. Certainly I thought nothing of the kind. I never think my right hon. Friend's speeches are anything except exceedingly able, but I did think—and I am afraid I still think—it was a very dangerous speech, that it laid down propositions which I can hardly think my right hon. Friend sufficiently considered—propositions which go a great deal further than anything relating to this Amendment. I will return to what my right hon. Friend said in a moment, but let me, at the very outset, make a preliminary objection to the Amendment which is before us. The preliminary objection that I make to the Amendment—and it applies to all the objectors within its compass—is that it is a retrospective enactment, inflicting disability of which they had no notice when they incurred it. It is a very well known maxim of legislation that the Legislature should in no circumstances

inflict punishments or disabilities upon persons retrospectively without giving them notice before they commit the offence for which they are to be punished or disabled, so that they may, if they please, avoid the punishment or disability. I submit that this Amendment transgresses that. Had it been the intention of Parliament, at the time the Military Service Act was passed, to disable any person who desired to avail himself of the Conscientious Objector Clause, Parliament should, in all honest and straightforward dealing, have said so then. They should have said that if a man availed himself of this objection he was subject to a certain disability, and then those who took it would have known where they were. But solemnly to offer by legislation a certain exemption, and then, after a small number of people have availed themselves of the exemption—have taken advantage of the position allowed them by the law—suddenly to turn round and say, "You did not know we regard with profound disapproval the very exemption we offered you. You did not know we intend to punish you for availing yourselves of the exemption we extended to you. You have done what we invited you to do." [HON. MEMBERS: "No!"] Yes, in the case contemplated by Parliament, when a person felt a conscientious objection he was to be exempted—"For availing yourselves of the machinery we set up, we take away from you the vote without warning"—and, as I say, without justice—"because now public opinion is in a state of irritation, and it would be unwise to resist that public opinion any longer."

Let me ask, Who are the objectors? That preliminary criticism applies to all of them, but the mass of my arguments, which I design to submit to the House, applies mainly to some. I had not the good fortune to hear the speech of my hon. Friend the Member for Ayr Burghs (Sir G. Younger), but I read it in the report, and, among other interesting features, it contained a very interesting analysis of conscientious objectors, describing the various groups into which they fell. That must convince the House, as everyone who has looked into this knows, that there are very different people classed together as conscientious objectors. The distinction I should

perhaps make of them—of course, it is a rough distinction—is that in the case of certain conscientious objectors—I do not know whether they are the majority or not, but that does not matter—there is a seditious element woven in with their conscientious objection, and, as the tribunals have found, it is not that they are not sincere, but it is that there is another element besides conscientious objection, namely, a seditious objection, with which I have not the very smallest sympathy. But there is professedly another category of persons who have a moral or religious objection to military service, and who confine themselves essentially to saying, "I am bound to respect, in regard to my own life, my own conscience. My own conscience tells me that to do as you would have me do would be wrong. Therefore, without any desire of sedition or rebellion, but merely because of the inherent right of every man to obey his own conscience and the higher moral law, which, according to Christianity, we are told comes before the law of the State, I must disobey, not seditiously but because I am answerable here and hereafter for how far I obey my own conscience."

Those are two very different cases, and let me say—because my right hon. Friend referred to sincere rebels with some sympathy—the case of the true conscientious objector is quite different from even the best rebel. At any rate, there are two great distinctions. A rebel is not satisfied with managing his own action; he wishes to control directly or indirectly the Government of the State. The Irish rebellion sought to overthrow the British Government in Ireland. Some rebellions we think right, and some we think wrong. The rebellion of 1688 we think right; the rebellions of 1715 and 1745 we think wrong. In my view, and in my right hon. Friend's view, the rebellion that was menaced in Ulster would have been righteous, but we are all of opinion that the Sinn Fein rebellion was wrong. [Laughter.] My hon. friends think I am speaking facetiously, but they are profoundly mistaken. I am speaking what I believe to be the platitudes of the subject, because I am anxious to clear part of the ground. In all these cases the rebels, whether they were right, or whether they were wrong, were seeking

to influence a great many people besides themselves. They were seeking to control in one way or another the government of the country. I do not think anyone who does that can complain of other people, differently minded, who oppose them, or punish them for their action. Both are acting conscientiously; both pursue the object which they believe is in the interest of the country, and if, in the extreme case, they avail themselves of force they have no right to complain of force being used against them. But that is wholly different from the conscientious objector, who claims to do nothing except to manage his own action, which he is bound to do.

There is a second distinction. The conscientious objector does what the rebel does not. He appeals to a higher law altogether than the law of the State. The Jacobites of 1745 and the supporters of King George II. were essentially aiming at objects on the same plane, as one may say, and justified their objects by arguments of the same sort, with a different termination. Neither appealed to a different standard of morals or a different standard of expediency from the other, but it is the very essence of the conscientious objector's position that he says the State has, up to a certain point, undoubtedly authority over him, but that in this respect he is bound to obey a higher law than the law of the State—a religious law or a moral law which prohibits him from obeying the law of the State. "I only ask," he says, "leave to obey it in my own person, and because I feel the burden of it upon me. I am bound, as I conceive, to obey this higher law. I am bound therefore to disobey the lower law of the State, not because I am seditious or rebellious, or because I want to impose my opinions upon anyone else in the world, but because every individual is responsible here and hereafter for what he does by his own act and by his own will, whether the State commands him or whether it does not."

It is about this that I listened with surprise, if I may say so with respect, to my right hon. Friend who seems to put aside the appeal to the higher law altogether. It is not that he says, as many hon. Members supporting the Amendment, perhaps, would say, "Yes, we recognise the higher law, but you misinterpret it." That is a point I am coming to in a

minute. My right hon. Friend says the safety of the State is supreme ; there is nothing beyond it. That is not a novel opinion. I might even say it is a notorious opinion. It is precisely the argument that the German Chancellor, Bethmann-Hollweg, used in the famous speech in which he spoke of the Treaty safeguarding Belgium as a scrap of paper. My memory may be inaccurate, and I may be mistaken, but I almost think he quoted the very same saying, that the safety of the State is the supreme law. If there be no other law, if the safety of the State is for the government of the State, and the citizens of the State, the last word of moral obligation, then how can we blame the German Government for many things for which we do blame them ?

Take, for example, one crime which sank, and deservedly sank, into our hearts, and which roused us to passionate indignation—I mean the execution of Miss Cavell. It is not disputed that Miss Cavell was, according to the strict law of the War, guilty of a war crime. Why did we say it was inhuman and iniquitous to put her to death ? Because, according to a higher law, she had a strong claim to the respect and gratitude of the German Government and people who put her to death. Precisely because there was a higher law she ought not to have suffered as she did, and precisely because we believe in that higher law we uttered the cry of indignation at her death. Are we to be told now, in the language of her murderers, that the safety of the State is the supreme law ? No, Sir. We cannot make any such answer. We are Christians first and Englishmen afterwards. Christianity can never compromise with any national claim. It must have its disciples all in all, soul and body, leaving no sphere out, and to reserve to the State any supremacy is to part company with the Christian system altogether.

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Bonar Law) : I should like to know exactly what the right hon. Gentleman means by his argument. I confess I have rather been accused of making a foolish speech. Does he mean that because we say the German State does things that nobody else and no State ought to do on the grounds of necessity, that is the same thing as when the other States, notably France, America, and

everybody else say, "We have a right to demand that every citizen shall give his life in the service of the State if we ask him"?

LORD H. CECIL: I made no such general statement. What I said was that you cannot meet the claim of the conscientious objector by simply saying that the safety of the State is the supreme law. You must accept his appeal to a higher law and argue on the basis of that higher law.

Mr. BONAR LAW: Does my noble Friend's argument mean that a man who has been before a tribunal can demand that his conscience shall be above the decision of the tribunal?

LORD H. CECIL: I will come to that point in its proper place, but it does not here arise. The point I was pressing is this—and I am glad to hear that my right hon. Friend does not really hold the view which his language seemed to convey—that you cannot set aside a conscientious objector merely by saying that the safety of the State is supreme, and that we will not listen to him, if he claims to serve and obey a higher law than the law of the State. You must say, "We agree with you that there is a higher law than the law of the State, but, judging you according to that higher law, you are in this way or that way in fault." Therefore, I think it is clear that we must follow the conscientious objector on to the ground of an appeal to conscience, that is to say, an appeal to the moral law which is admitted to be superior to the law of the State.

Let me say, in passing, how very surprising the Amendment seems to me, even on what I consider to be the very unsound basis of the supremacy of the State. Let me point out that if we take the supremacy of the State as the supreme rule, and if we take military service as being such a special obligation that it ought to be made in quite a distinct way a qualification for a vote, we are at once in a perfect wood of trouble, out of which I think my hon. Friend the Member for Ayr Burghs (Sir G. Younger) will hardly be able to guide us. There is the difficulty of Ireland. The Military Service Acts have not been extended to Ireland, and yet we are to give votes to all the

young men of military age in Ireland, although they have not got this qualification of military service. If the need of the State be so supreme, if the law of its safety be so cogent, will not some people at any rate ask " How comes it then that you are exempting twenty or thirty times as many people in Ireland, because they are Irishmen, while you are not exempting merely a few in England because they are religious ? "

Sir G. YOUNGER : Very few are religious.

LORD H. CECIL : Even those few my hon. Friend does not propose to exempt. There are other persons who escape because you have not imposed the Military Service Acts, but persons who are highly disobedient to the State and quite as disobedient as the conscientious objector. There is the whole body of Sinn Feiners. There are the more amiable Sinn Feiners, animated by a great desire to establish Irish nationality, and the less amiable ones who are perhaps moved by German money, but they are all to have votes. There are also the persons who have been actually convicted in the course of the rebellion ; those too, I apprehend, are to have votes. There are a great many other persons. I find it difficult to read without a cynical smile my hon. Friend's Amendment, because there is such an air of absurdity in the language of it. The second part of the Amendment reads :

> " Or, who having joined the Forces, has been sentenced by court-martial for refusal to obey orders, and who alleged conscientious objection to military service as a reason for such refusal."

That reminds me at once that there are a great many other people who have been court-martialled besides conscientious objectors. The disqualification is there carefully limited, and it must only be for refusal to obey orders, and only if that refusal has assigned to it a conscientious cause. There are also those who have been insubordinate, and deserters, and all those who have been sentenced for various military crimes and for crimes not merely military but civil, those guilty of criminal vice of the worst and most atrocious kind—all those may have votes. All those who have been sentenced by civil tribunals, such as pickpockets, robbers, all those concerned in

fraud, acts of violence, and those animated by the most odious lusts, the names of whose offences must not pass honest lips—all those may have votes. And why not ? There is, at any rate, nothing conscientious about them. They are free from the damning taint of a strong but unenlightened conscience. Even if I accepted the basis of my right hon. Friend's argument, I should still feel this Amendment was a scandalous absurdity. If you are really going to disfranchise persons because they are disobedient to the State, you must certainly disfranchise all those who have been disobedient by way of crime as well as those who have been disobedient by way of a conscientious objection. To draw a distinction by which you admit all the worst people in the world, the thieves, the miscreants, and only exclude the conscientious objectors, will not commend itself to the religious bodies of this country.

I think my right hon. Friend profoundly misjudges public opinion. He listens to a vocal, excitable, almost hysterical outburst, but he does not hear the much deeper sentiment of the great body of the moral and religious people of this country, who, whether they worship in church or chapel, will hear with indignation that conscientious objectors are to be disfranchised, while every criminal is to have a vote. Even if you accept my right hon. Friend's basis of argument I should argue thus. But I do not accept it, I say that we must proceed to ask what the higher law to which the conscientious objector appeals does require. Let me remind the House of some of the cases which will be included in this disfranchisement. They will include the Quakers who are working with the ambulance units abroad. How is it possible to justify setting them below all those bad people of whom I have been speaking ? They have gone out and they are serving. They are even running great risks. I do not agree with the scruple which has led them to refuse military service but who can say that they are not well and honourably employed ? I want the House to fix its mind on those and other objectors of the Quaker sort. I do not mean only those who belong to the Society of Friends, but those who belong to other religious bodies, simple-minded people, perhaps,

under the influence of a mistaken scruple, who say, " We are sorry that we cannot fight in the war, because the guilt of shedding blood will lie at our door." The first observation I will make about that is, that according to the common religion we believe, holding the view that they do, they are bound to act as they do. To those who in all sincerity think it is wicked to fight in war—for them it is wicked to fight in war. It ceases to be a mere delusion, and it becomes truly operative upon the conscience. As I pointed out during the Committee stage, this is a principle which we are bound to recognise, and we do recognise it in our government of other races. We do not impose on them what they foolishly and superstitiously believe to be wrong. We never require Mahomedans, or Hindus, or any other race which has a different moral standard from our own, to violate their own conscience. We do this not only on the ground of policy, but because we think it right to do it. Although some particular scruple may be superstitious, we think that to violate it is in truth wrong. On the first point, then, on going before a higher tribunal, we find that the objectors are right, and that they are bound to obey their conscience. What, then, can we say? We can only say their conscience is mistaken. I say it, and I can assure my right hon. Friend not at all less vehemently than he—and I have written it to a great number—I am sure they are thoroughly and utterly mistaken, but are you going to disqualify people and punish them for being mistaken in their opinions ? If you do you are surely back again to the old familiar ground of religious persecution. Certainly if I held that view, that you might disqualify for opinion, I should not begin with the conscientious objector. I should begin myself with Roman Catholics, Presbyterians, Congregationalists, Methodists, and many other classes, and I am not sure that my right hon. Friend himself would escape before my disfranchisement was complete. It is to me quite as clear that the Presbyterians are mistaken on the points in which they differ with the Episcopalians as that conscientious objectors are wrong about military service. Both propositions seem to me to be perfectly plain.

That is always so in these matters. Very good people have over and over again felt bound to impose their views because they were so certain that they were right, but we have come surely to the conclusion that it is both impolitic from the point of view of the State and also inconsistent with the best interests of religious truth to punish people for erroneous opinions. I say, therefore, when we come to argue it on that ground, that we must either adopt the position of religious persecution or we must say, as I say, "Yes, you are mistaken, but I am not justified in forcing your conscience, because it is against my own conscience to do so, and therefore I give you exemption." I thought that was the position that Parliament took up, and I am persuaded that it is the right position for Parliament to take up. We must not refuse the vote to people who are doing what they sincerely believe to be right upon moral or religious grounds merely because we think that these moral or religious grounds are mistaken. If you do not adopt that position you must disfranchise a great many people besides conscientious objectors. But, above all, I feel most strongly—and this, I confess, is why I care about the controversy apart from the strength, as it seems to me, of the case—the danger of the particular error into which my right hon. Friend for a moment slipped last night. I am most anxious that this country should maintain the proposition that there is a higher law, that we view with admiration any appeal to that higher law, and that we will not listen to the doctrine that the State's interest is to be supreme, but on the contrary that we will make our authority conform to the higher standard and keep the State within its proper function, and within its proper scope.

Belief in the State cannot help us to bear the sufferings or control the passions of the War. It is a barren faith, as well as a degrading faith. It does but encumber us and shut out from us that higher world in which we ought to live. It is like a mist that hangs round the surface of the earth, and beyond which the sunlight and sky of the higher life shine serene. I was taken up in an aeroplane on a misty day, and all was hazy and dark below. We passed through, and there was the sun shining in strength and the sky radiant and brilliant ;

the mists were no more than a white carpet beneath our feet. So we ought to rise, if we are to face the dangers and difficulties of this War, above the belief in the doctrine of the State. We ought, on the contrary, to maintain that the State must conform to this higher law. And so we say as against the Germans. But shall we even retain to ourselves that self-respect which is essential in maintaining a great moral cause if we do not act up to our own principles for which we are fighting in the face of Europe, if we do not say to ourselves and in our own country when people are acting conscientiously that their conscience must not be forced, and when they obey their conscience that they must not be punished and disabled for so obeying, because that is the allegiance we owe to the higher law we obey, and because so we must act as citizens of the true city of the new Jerusalem which is the mother of us all ?

It is in the belief in that higher region of allegiance, which imposes upon us something more than the State can ask from us, and which gives us something that the State can never give, that we should vindicate the great cause that we have in hand. We are fighting, we sometimes say, for civilisation. I would rather say that we are fighting that civilisation may remain a Christian civilisation, and certainly, according to a Christian civilisation, it is wrong to force the conscience of the sincere. It is wrong to impose upon them a duty which they believe to be contaminating and corrupting. I hope, therefore, that this Amendment will be rejected. I hope it, first of all, because it is a retrospective law, and so contrary to all sound principles of legislation. I hope it still more because it appears to enforce the law of the State as superior to the moral law ; and I am certain that if we give countenance to that way of thinking, we run the danger of becoming, as I fear that the Germans have some of them become, idolators of the State, so that it is, indeed, the abomination that maketh desolate, a blood-stained idol, the Moloch of our time.

The following letter was written on August 22, 1918, in answer to an inquiry by the Dean of Christ Church whether the writer approved of Lord Lansdowne's proposals to seek to open negotiations with Germany with a view to concluding a satisfactory peace.

MY DEAR MR. DEAN,

You invite me to express an opinion about the recommendation made by Lord Lansdowne and other eminent men, that the British Government should endeavour to facilitate the opening of negotiations for a just and lasting peace. It is hardly necessary to say that I regard whatever Lord Lansdowne suggests with the deep respect that is due to his great abilities and most distinguished public services. His advice is, I am sure, prompted by the purest and most honourable patriotism. Nevertheless, as I know he would be the last man in the world to object to honest disagreement, I have no hesitation in saying that it seems to me that his advice is mistaken.

If this war were merely a struggle between conflicting national interests, I might think differently. If this war were, for instance, like the Crimean War, it might be wisely ended as that war was, without any clear victory or defeat. When nations are fighting for their interests, it is obviously wise to make peace as soon as the interests involved are secured. Nay, the burdens and sacrifices required by war may become so serious that it may be wise to abandon some minor interests for the sake of the relief of peace. Questions of interest must be determined by considerations of interest. There are doubtless such questions involved in this war. We first made war to vindicate the integrity and independence of Belgium and to preserve France against an unprovoked attack. These are matters vital to the interests of Great Britain. Apart from the obligations of treaties, the complete independence of Belgium and the assured power of France are bulwarks important to our own safety. It may well be true that the German Government would now be willing to make a peace

which would wholly restore Belgium and would leave France not less strong in comparison with Germany than it was in July, 1914. If, then, these objects for which we made war could now be achieved by negotiation, why (it may be asked) can we not wisely and honourably make peace ?

The answer is that much more is now at issue in the war than the causes of our intervention in it. An aspect of the war different from its effects on any national interests, whether British or French or Belgian, began to appear at a very early stage. From the time of the burning of Louvain it began to be seen that we were not merely fighting in redemption of a promise nor to bring a conflict of national interests to the decision of the ordeal by battle, but to preserve the well-being of the civilised world from a monstrous evil. This character of the war became plainer and plainer as time went on until, with the unlimited submarine attack and the intervention of America, it has become so dominant as to obscure all merely national controversies. That the citizens of a nation can know no higher object than to advance the interests of that nation, and for that object may commit any cruelty and any perfidy, is a doctrine which civilisation must either destroy or else itself perish. The war is now a crusade. We fight to overthrow a principle, to stamp out a moral disease, to extirpate an abomination.

It is curious that those who advocate negotiations are always also advocates of establishing a League of Nations. I am myself a warm supporter of the plan for such a League. But in considering that plan one is obliged to ask how in the last resort the League would enforce its just authority. Surely when everything else failed to reduce to obedience a rebel nation, the League would have to make war upon it and force it to submission. Would not such a war be very like the war we are waging now ? Has not the great alliance against Germany become a rudimentary form of the League we desire to see established ? The war is no longer one between two groups of nations. It is the civilised world fighting to chastise rebels against its fundamental laws. The war can end, not in conversations and negotiations as between equals, but in the recognised defeat and consequent submission of the

rebel nation. We have to show that there is in fact and reality a power in the world greater than the power of any nation ; for if that be not shown, on what basis can rest the authority of the League ? If the event of the war were to show that Germany could hold its own against the world, the unconditioned nationalism, which is the evil principle that Germans maintain, would have been justified in point of force though not of right. It is vital to the idea of a super-national supremacy which is implied in a League of Nations to prove that there is a power in the world greater than the strength of the most warlike nation. Otherwise Germany might become neither a loyal member nor even an obedient subject of the League. Its nationalism might still remain unlimited, seeking afresh to strengthen itself by accumulated force till it should be strong enough to fight again ; other nations would be obliged to do the like and the League would fail of its purpose.

The war must be fought till it end in the submission of Germany. By submission I do not in the least mean destruction. Indeed it is not, I believe, possible to destroy a strong and united nation by military defeat. Jena did not destroy Prussia ; Sedan did not destroy France ; and a greater victory than these cannot be won. We do not seek to destroy Germany, but we seek to force Germans to recognise that they have been defeated and to submit to the authority of a world stronger than they. In familiar language, we seek to " abate their pride, asswage their malice and confound their devices " ; for their pride made them strive to dominate the world, their malice has defiled both land and sea with murder, and their devices, untiring if also unskilful, have been traced in every land, stirring up discord and violence and revolt. It is the end of these crimes and of the spirit that prompts them that I hope to see realised by the submission of Germany. And submission cannot be attained by negotiations such as are now suggested to us. Negotiation at the present time might lead to an agreement as between equals, but not to the submission of a defeated nation to superior power. And until that submission is made it is idle to hope that the German Government will turn from the false gods it worships. I dare say there are wise and good Germans who hate the system of blood and iron.

But they have no power, and will have none so long as that system maintains its repute. Our business is not to suffer it to save its credit, but to make its failure plain according to its own standards. Moloch must be humiliated in the sight of all his votaries, if they are to accept a purer faith.

If you ask what terms of peace I contemplate I am not careful to reply. For we have to-day an inversion of the ordinary position in war. Usually victory is sought in order to extort certain terms ; but now the defeat of our enemies is in itself the object, and the terms of peace will mainly be important in order to symbolise that defeat. For this reason it seems essential to insist that Alsace and Lorraine shall no longer be German territory, not because of their material value, but because of their moral significance. They are the trophy of the victory of 1870 and of blood and iron—that victory which has cast upon the Germans the spell we have to break. But beyond this and the obvious claim that full reparation must be made to our Allies, I should prefer to leave the exact terms to the Allied Governments. I do not believe in unofficial members of Parliament, who have not the knowledge that alone Governments can possess, pronouncing upon the details of foreign affairs. It is sufficient that they should try to ensure that the main purposes of Parliament should be carried out; the precise methods of achieving these purposes in foreign affairs must be left to the Government. But one point of policy already declared by the Government I must not pass over. It is that the treaty of peace shall include the beginning of a League of Nations, designed to prevent future wars. This every hater of war—and which of us does not hate war ?—must heartily support. Yet we must not be blind to the extent and difficulty of the change we desire. The diplomatic and political machinery is the smallest part of the task. All nations need a conversion of heart before the League can realise our hopes and make an end of war. To think of the League of Nations merely as a diplomatic structure, because it must be begun by a diplomatic instrument, is like thinking of baptism as a hydropathic treatment, because it is administered by immersion or affusion. In both it is the inward change that is the essence. The League

of Nations will be of very limited value unless it is associated with a profound conversion of opinion and affection. To make an end of war nothing less is requisite than a shifting of the centre of human allegiance from nationality to something wider. We need to feel a super-national patriotism. Such a change as this cannot be effected by the experience of war, however terrible, or by any treaty, however solemn. It must be the work of moral and religious influence and probably of a long period of time. Yet the war has given a powerful impulse to the work. It is an exaggeration, though an instructive exaggeration, to say that this war has done for the League of Nations almost as much as the war of 1870 did for German unity. But at least the treaty of peace may lay the formal foundations of the League. We can make a beginning. Even now we can think and act as belonging to something larger than our own country, as owing allegiance to that great League of Nations—for such it is—which is now fighting to avenge civilisation of its enemies. So we shall feel bound to secure its undoubted victory and that submission of Germany to its authority which is the goal of all our efforts in war and the starting-point of all we hope for in peace.

I remain,
Yours very sincerely,
HUGH CECIL.

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